

Message Text

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43

ACTION EB-07

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FCC-02 INR-07 NSAE-00 OC-05 USIA-15 COME-00 BIB-01

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1136

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TAGS: ETEL ITU SZ

SUBJ: ITU COUNCIL CHAIRMAN REQUEST TO EXCEED BUDGET CEILINGS

REF: A. STATE 182022; B. STATE 184061

1. SUMMARY: RUTSCHI SAID HE PERSONALLY APPROVES OF GHAZAL'S REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO EXCEED THE BUDGET CEILINGS BUT WOULD PREFER TO INCLUDE A 2.5 PERCENT LIMIT ON ANY EXCESS. ADVANCE APPROVAL WOULD GIVE THE COUNCIL GREATER FLEXIBILITY IN REACHING A DECISION ON A NEW BUDGET WITHIN THE SHORT TIME ALLOTTED TO THE NEXT SESSION. NO OFFICIAL GOS POSITION HAS BEEN FORMULATED AS YET, BUT RUTSCHI THOUGHT HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD EVENTUALLY GIVE ITS RELUCTANT APPROVAL TO EXCEEDING THE 1977 BUDGET CEILING.

2. FOLLOWING DELIVERY OF THE TEXT OF O'NEILL'S LETTER (REFTEL B) TO RUDOLF RUTSCHI OF THE SWISS PTT, AN EMBOFF HELD A LENGTHY CONVERSATION WITH RUTSCHI ON AUGUST 6.

3. RUTSCHI EXPRESSED HIS APPRECIATION FOR RECEIVING THE TEXT OF THE US LETTER BEFORE IT WAS SENT TO THE SYG. HE SAID THIS WAS YET ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF THE EXCELLENT COOPERATION HE HAS ALWAYS RECEIVED FROM US REPRESENTATIVES DURING HIS FIFTEEN YEARS ON THE ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL
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AND ASKED THAT HIS PERSONAL REGARDS BE FORWARDED TO O'NEILL.

4. AFTER THIS PLEASANT BEGINNING, RUTSCHI WENT ON TO EXPLAIN THAT HE PERSONALLY DOES NOT BELIEVE CHAIRMAN GHAZAL EXCEEDED HIS AUTHORITY IN SENDING THE JULY 21 LETTER (WHICH THE SWISS HAVE RECEIVED). STRESSING THST HIS VIEWS ARE PERSONAL AND NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF THE SWISS GOVERNMENT, RUTSCHI SAID HE DOUBTED THAT THE 1977 BUDGET, WHICH MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT DECISIONS MADE BY THE COUNCIL IN ITS NEXT SESSION, COULD BE PREPARED THEN REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY THE COUNCIL WITHIN THE 19 DAYS ALLOTTED FOR THE NEXT SESSION. AS CHAIRMAN OF THE FINANACE COMMITTEE, RUTSCHI WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE VIEWS OF THE COUNCIL MEMBERS IN ADVANCE OF THE NEXT SESSION. HE SAID A BUDGET CAN ALWAYS BE PREPARED WITHIN THE CEILING BUT THIS COULD INVOLVE CUTTING ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS OF THE ITU STAFF. HE WOULD MUCH PREFER TO HAVE THE FLEXIBILITY OF ADVANCE PERMISSION TO EXCEED THE TORREMOLINOS CEILING FOR 1977, EVEN THOUGH SUCH PERMISSION DID NOT MEAN THE FINAL RESULT WOULD BE OVER THE CEILING.

5. GHAZAL, WHO WAS PREPARING A ROUTINE LETTER TO COUNCIL MEMBERS TO INFORM THEM THAT THE 1976 BUDGET WAS WITHIN THE CEILING AND TO THANK THEM FOR THEIR COOPERATION, THOUGHT IT WOULD BE AN OPPORTUNE TIME TO ASK FOR AUTHORITY TO EXCEED THE 1977 CEILING. SYG MILI CALLED RUTSCHI WHO AGREED THAT THIS WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA BUT WANTED TO INCLUDE A LIMIT OF 2.5 PERCENT OVER THE TORREMOLINOS CEILING. RUTSCHI WAS SOMEWHAT SURPRISED THAT 1978 AND 1979 WERE INCLUDED AND DISAPPOINTED THAT THE 2.5 PERCENT LIMIT WAS NOT, BUT HE FELT THAT GHAZAL HAD BASICALLY DONE THE RIGHT THING. WHILE RUTSCHI AGREED THAT THE COUNCIL SHOULD MAKE DECISIONS ONLY IN SESSION, HE DID NOT THINK GHAZAL'S LETTER CONSTITUTED A NEW COUNCIL DECISION, BUT MERELY ASKED FOR AN EXTENSION OF THE DECISION TAKEN ON THE 1976 BUDGET. THE EMBOFF POINTED OUT THAT THE COUNCIL DECISION APPLIED ONLY TO THE 1976 BUDGET AND THE QUESTION OF THE CEILING FOR 1977 WOULD APPEAR TO BE A SEPARATE DECISION, BUT RUTSCHI HELD TO HIS VIEW THAT IT WAS NOT. RUTSCHI SAID THAT ADVANCE APPROVAL TO EXCEED THE CEILING FOR 1977 WOULD GIVE THE COUNCIL GREATER FREEDOM IN CONSIDERING THE BUDGET AND THE ACTUAL COUNCIL DECISION WOULD BE ON THE BUDGET ITSELF.

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6. RUTSCHI THOUGHT A FOLLOW-UP LETTER FROM GHAZAL WOULD BE VERY USEFUL BUT NOT FOR THE REASONS STATED IN THE O'NEILL LETTER. A FOLLOW-UP COULD BE USED TO GIVE GREATER DETAIL ON THE NEED FOR AUTHORITY TO EXCEED THE 1977 CEILING AND TO SET A 2.5 PERCENT LIMIT ON ANY EXCESS. THIS, RUTSCHI HOPED, WOULD ELICIT MORE YES ANSWERS FROM THE MEMBERS.

7. RUTSCHI SAID NO OFFICIAL GOS POSITION HAS BEEN FORMULATED AS YET, AND HE DID NOT EXPECT HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD BE IN ANY RUSH TO ANSWER GHAZAL'S JULY 21 LETTER. THE GOS RELUCTANTLY APPROVED THE DECISION ON THE 1976 BUDGET AND WILL PROBABLY BE EVEN MORE RELUCTANT WITH REGARD TO THE 1977 BUDGET. RUTSCHI THOUGHT THE GOS WOULD WAIT AND SEE HOW OTHER COUNTRIES REACT BUT, IN THE END, WOULD PROBABLY GIVE ITS PERMISSION FOR THE COUNCIL TO EXCEED THE TORREMOLINOS CEILING ON THE 1977 BUDGET.
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Disposition Event:
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Margaret P. Grafeld
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